

THE
Cause of Poverty

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THE CAUSE OF POVERTY.*

I trust that it may not be considered very pedantic on my part, if I explain what I understand by the terms *Cause* and *Poverty*. By *poverty* I mean a condition of life wherein there is permanently or temporarily a difficulty felt by the poor person to obtain that amount of food, shelter, and clothing necessary to maintain health in any given climate. The word *Cause* I mean to define merely as it is used in ordinary parlance. Thus, we speak of the moon being the cause of the tides; because, although we are aware that the sun and indeed all other members of the solar system must, according to the theory of universal gravitation, effect something towards the production of the tides, we yet see that the moon is by far the most important of all these. In the same way, I at once acknowledge that there are many accidental causes of poverty, such as idleness, drink, bad laws, disease, and a host of other similar accidents; but I contend that all of these causes are so small, in comparison with the paramount cause of poverty in an industrious country like this, that we are entitled, without more exaggeration than is allowable under the circumstances, to attribute the phenomenon of low wages and poverty almost entirely to over-population, or over-rapid multiplication of the human race. I am sensible that this allegation of mine will meet with strenuous opposition from those who consider that poverty is due to mal-distribution, and not to under-production; which is naturally the contention of those persons who are not thoroughly acquainted with the theory of population, as held by the scientific economists of Europe; but I cannot help thinking, that even a few minutes of calm consideration of the evidences which prove the law may show to the most optimistic of modern enthusiasts, that, unless they admit that over-population is the main cause of low wages, they will ever remain barren revolutionists, instead of really beneficent reformers, as they desire to be considered.

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Before the celebrated essay on Population was published by Malthus in 1798, there had been many writers, both in antiquity, and indeed not long before Malthus himself, who had shown that over-population was the most fruitful cause of disease, sedition, and poverty. Adam Smith had shown that, whilst it took 500 years in the middle ages for an European nation to double its population, owing to the scanty accession of food supplies in that continent; population in the new colonies of the United States before his day had often been doubled in less than 25 years, owing to the plentiful supply of food obtainable from the untouched or virgin soils of a new country. Hume, in common with most of the writers in the last century, failed to understand the real reason why poverty exists in the midst of highly civilised peoples; and considered that idleness, or the love of ease, was the original sin of the race, which would always lead to poverty.

The contention of Malthus, that there is a tendency in population to increase more rapidly than the necessities of existence can be increased, is now admitted by all those who have grasped the simple law of nature which he was the first thoroughly to explain. It is now as clearly made out as the law of gravitation of Newton, or that of chemical equivalents of Dalton. If, said Malthus, we examine the nature of plants and animals, we remark, at once, how great a provision exists in Nature for the reproduction of each species, and how scanty a provision for the bringing of all germs to maturity. The seeds of fennel or of dandelion are produced in myriads, and the whole earth would soon become covered with any species of plant, if all the seeds it produces could find room to germinate. It is the same with animals. In the case of fish, the ova of the cod or the herring are so numerous, that if they could all come to maturity, the shallower seas would soon swarm with these fish. When we leave the less developed species and come to the mammalia, we again meet with the enormous power of increase by reproduction in such animals as the rabbit or the domestic cat. A few years ago, some pairs of rabbits were conveyed to Australia and New Zealand, and from these there have arisen such hosts of that species of mammal, that in many places the fields are reported to resemble the floor of a kitchen, swarming with beetles; so thickly do these rodents swarm on them. Coming to larger mammals, we hear it stated that a flock of sheep can double its numbers, if pasture be sufficient in quantity, in $2\frac{1}{2}$ years; and that cattle

can do so in three years. Indeed, it is calculated by farmers who rear stock, that 40 per cent. of their sheep, 20 per cent. of their cattle, and 67 per cent. of their pigs may be slaughtered annually without lessening the size of the flocks. We are thus prepared to hear that the tendency to double in the human race, which is only, after all, the highest of all animals, is also very great. Euler, a well known mathematician, cited by Malthus, calculated that, on the supposition of a death-rate of 1 in 36 (our present death-rate being one in 50) and with the further proviso of the births being to the deaths as 3 to 1 (which is less than obtains at present in New Zealand, for there the birth-rate has been about 36 per 1000 inhabitants, and the death-rate 11 per 1000) the period of doubling a population would be only $12\frac{1}{2}$ years; and Sir William Petty, in his work on Political Economy, supposed a doubling possible in about 10 years. This, then, is the *tendency* to doubling which has so often been misunderstood by confused reasoners on social questions. Even in modern London this tendency is well illustrated in the case of the parish of Fulham, which is inhabited by working classes concerned in market gardening; for, in 1888, the birth-rate in that district was actually 48 per 1000 inhabitants, or nearly at the rate of a birth to every 20 inhabitants. Taking, for the sake of argument, the limit of the powers of the race as capable of furnishing 50 births per 1000, and the possible death-rate, which but slightly differs from that of the 650,000 persons who now inhabit well-fed New Zealand, at 10 per 1000, it would be possible, if enough food were obtainable, for a population of 1000 to become 1,040 in one year, 1,090 in two years, and 2000 in 18 years; thus we can understand Sir W. Petty's 10 years of possible doubling of the human race, if the birth-rate were over 60 per 1000. This then gives us a picture of the power of multiplication of our race of animals: and we can understand the matter more clearly, if we study the physiology of reproduction. Thus, let us admit that the age of reproduction in the human female commences at the age of 15 in this climate, and terminates at 45. This gives 30 years, during which reproduction may take place; and, allowing two years between the birth of each child, it seems clear that any healthy human female might easily be the parent of at least 15 children. As a matter of experience, I have myself records of two sisters, one of whom had 22 children, and the other 23 children; and doubtless, in former times, and even yet among primitive peoples, such large families are not very unfrequently produced.

So much, then, for the tremendous powers of reproduction of the human race. Malthus compared this virtual *tendency* with the actual increase of man in such long peopled states as China and Japan. He observed that it may be fairly doubted whether the best directed efforts of human industry could double the agricultural produce of China even once, in any number of years. The doubling of the race, which in this century has taken place in the United States and in our Australian Colonies, is in strongest contrast to the powers of doubling in such long peopled countries as those of Europe or the Eastern states I have alluded to. New Zealand in 1871 had a population of 256,260 white persons; and, in 1881, this had increased to 489,933, and to 578,482 in 1886. To show how few persons die when food is as easily obtainable as it is at present in New Zealand, in a good climate, in 1886 there were 19,299 births and 6,135 deaths in these islands, which gave a birth-rate of about 34 per 1,000 and a death-rate of about 10 per 1,000. The birth-rate was comparatively low in New Zealand, because in 1886 there was an excess of males over females of 54,040 out of a population of 578,482. The difference between this birth-rate and death-rate is about 24 per 1,000, whereas the United Kingdom in 1886 had a birth-rate of 31.1 per 1,000 and a death-rate of 19 per 1,000; Germany had a birth-rate of 38.4 per 1,000 and a death-rate of 28 per 1,000; and France a birth-rate of 23.8 per 1,000 and a death-rate of 22.5. So that the excess of births over deaths per 1,000 was in New Zealand, 24; in the United Kingdom, 12; in Germany, 11.4; and in France only 1.3 per 1,000.

Those who can get a thorough grasp of the import of such figures will, I believe, never again forget the enormous powers of human increase; and will readily see why it is that so much poverty still exists in such highly advanced countries as England, Germany or other long peopled Continental states. We pride ourselves with justice on the great discoveries made by science in all departments of industry during this wonderful century, and are astounded that, where there are such splendid powers of production, there should still remain, in the midst of London or Berlin, sweating for a crust of bread, or heartrending strife between employers and employed in so many trades. Unfortunately, although the powers of production advance like a gallant steed pressing onward at full gallop, the power of reproduction, like a locomotive, is so enormously swifter than production, that the less educated and more instinctive classes

of society have hitherto taken out all improvements in their position not, as the more thoughtful classes, in permanent ease, but merely in an increase in the number of children they have brought into the world. The dwellers in New Zealand can with equanimity hear of an increase of 24 per 1,000 in their population from the excess of births over deaths annually, for, even last year, the 650,000 white persons living there possessed 16,000,000 sheep, besides large herds of cattle and pigs, and plenty of cereals, and hence all were well fed; but in this country our excess of births over deaths, which last year amounted to no less than 470,000, has to be fed with imported food for the greater part, or sent abroad when food is not sufficient at home. Consequently, at the bottom of society in this country there is an incessant pressure of mouths on food supplies, and hence the mortality of the poorer classes is vastly higher than that of their richer neighbors. The rich or easy classes in England have at present an average age at death of actually 57 years, according to Dr. Ogle; whereas Dr. B. W. Richardson and Sir E. Chadwick some years ago found that the average age at death of the artizan class in Lambeth did not exceed 30 years. The earlier death of the poor has been, indeed, ascertained since the commencement of this century, when Dr. Villermé, in 1817, found that there was one death in 15 persons in the twelfth arrondissement, the poorest quarter of Paris, against one in 65 in the rich quarter of the Champs Elysées in that city. And the *Annuaire Statistique de la Ville de Paris* shows in its pages that there are three times as many children in the families of the poor in Paris as in those of the rich.

The inhabitants of the rich quarters of London (Kensington, Hanover Square, Hampstead, and St. James) produced, in 1886, 7,779 children collectively; whilst a nearly equal population in the poor quarters (Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, and St. George-in-the-East) produced 13,700, or had a birth rate of 38·3 per 1000 against 21·8 in the rich quarters. And the death rates of these poor districts in London was 24·4 per 1000 against 16 per 1000 in the rich ones. Everywhere we find in Europe that rapid birth rates and early death are connected in our large cities, whose slums are the graves of the children and of their half starved parents. Thus, in Dublin, Dr. Grimshaw, Registrar General of Ireland, has shown recently that, in 1886, the death rate of the well-to-do people of the city was 13·4, against 33·7 per 1000 among the wage-earning class.

And, what proves the extreme evils caused by high birth rates to the poor of this country, he showed that, among the rich classes in Dublin, there were only 5 children under the age of five in a hundred of population; whilst among the poor there were 15 per cent. of that class under the age of five years. At Paris, in 1886, there were 990 children under five years of age in La Villette, a poor quarter, in 10,000 inhabitants; but only 397 in the Champs Elysées.

The birth rate in Europe varies greatly from country to country. Thus, in semi-civilised Russia (Leinenborg, cited by Lagneau in his pamphlet, 1890), the birth rate is actually as high as 48·8 per 1000. In Prussia, from 1872 to 1881, it was 41·2, and in England, from 1871 to 1880, it was 35·5, and 32·9 from 1881 to 1888; whilst in France, from 1881 to 1888, the figures have fallen from 24·8 per 1000 to 23·09 in 1888. Indeed, were it not for the illegitimate births in France (75,000) there would, in 1888, have been a surplus of deaths over births in France, and any increase in population would have been from immigration. M. Lagneau sent me, a month ago, his excellent series of statistics assembled in his pamphlet, *L'Accroissement de la Population de la France*; and in it I find the reasons stated for this slow multiplication of the modern French. In page 17 he says: "Without in any way being aware of the precepts of the celebrated Malthus, our populations are more and more led, less in order to avoid poverty than by a desire to increase their comforts, to apply, if not *moral restraint*, at any rate prudential restraint. If, too often, our compatriots are very late in marrying, without at the same time practising abstinence, as this economist recommended, more and more, when they do marry, they limit the number of their children, in order to be able to supply without stint not only their real wants, but also their factitious or artificial wants. Thus, in defiance of the English professor, it is not the poor populations of France, or those who have most to dread misery, who show themselves as the unconscious pupils of Malthusianism, which is still warmly defended by M. Drysdale and some other economists or demographers; it is our rich populations, and those which are physiologically fruitful, as those of Normandy and the valley of the Garonne, who are more and more limiting their birth rate. Whilst for the whole of France, in 1888, there were 23·1 births for 1000 inhabitants: in the departments of Eure, Aisne, Tarn-et-Garonne, Lot-et-Garonne, and Gers, the birth rate in 1888 was respectively 17·6, 17·1, 15·8, 14·8,

and 14." Some of our Land Reformers will probably agree with M. Lagneau in attributing very great influence to the equal partition of property in France, in causing a lowered birth rate. He speaks as follows (p. 18): "The substitution of the law of equal distribution of patrimonial property in place of the law of primogeniture, by causing the breaking up of large estates, has apparently had a restrictive influence upon the birth rate; each proprietor of a piece of land fearing to have to divide it among several heirs. This is well observed in the case of certain proprietors of vineyards in France, as those on the river Marne. The little piece of land which suffices for the needs of a laborious proprietor could not suffice for those of several heirs." "Such proprietors have often only one child."

It seems, in general, to be a degree of modest comfort which suggests to the French peasant this care for the happiness of his heirs. Religion has not so much to do with the matter, it appears, as many have supposed. Thus M. Lagneau states that religious belief is as extensively spread in the departments of the South of France as in Normandy, where birth-rates are so small, being only about 14 or 15 per 1000 inhabitants, as compared with 29·8 in the Pas de Calais. And he adds that the Bretons with a high birth rate are pious; but not more so than the Normans, who have such a very low birth rate.

The standard of comfort or love of luxuries in the parents seems to be the cause of the limitation of the size of the family. The pauper is proverbially prolific, since he lets other people give his children all the food they get. A few months ago a piece of statistics from New York showed that in ten years 300 families of the richer classes in the Fifth Avenue had produced only 91 children, against 660 produced by 300 families in the poor quarter of Cherry Hill. Lagneau found, in France, in 1872, that whilst 100 families of farmers were composed of 353 persons, 100 families of manufacturers and merchants had 298 and 273, and 100 families of men devoting themselves to the liberal professions had only 174 children. In the same way I found in Paris, in 1879, that 100 famous medical men had merely had 170 children, whilst among the patients of the Metropolitan Free Hospital in Whitechapel, 100 married women over the age of 45 had produced 720 children.

The reasoning of those who have such small families in France is as follows: The means of existence and the greater care which can be bestowed on an only child, or on one

having few brothers and sisters, are far greater than they are in the case of large families. Thus, in France, between 1867 and 1876, when 3 children to a marriage was the average family, Gers, which had only 2.11 from 1877 to 1886, only lost 11.8 per cent. of the children in the first year of life, whereas in Finisterre, where there were 4 children to a marriage, 15.6 per cent. died in the first year of life. This fact is well seen in Liverpool, Manchester, and Berlin, where the high birth rate in the slums is often followed by death rates of 30, 40, or 45 per cent, of the children under the age of one year. The consequences of the small families, which have all along during this century become fashionable among all classes, is that comfort and wages among the working classes have been greatly augmented in France. Writing as far back as 1846, M. Lavergne says that Arthur Young had estimated in last century that the wages of country laborers were 9½d. a day, and that they had risen to 1s. 3d. In another place he mentions ("Rural Econ. of France," 1879) that the average daily wages of a French laborer had risen, since the commencement of the Revolution, in the ratio of 19 to 30; while, owing to more constant employment, the total earnings had increased in a still greater ratio, not short of double. M. de Lavergne's estimate of the average amount of a day's wages was grounded on a careful comparison, in this and all other economical points of view, of all the different provinces of France. This, then, is the advantage that prudent France has reaped from lowering her birth rate from 24.9 per 1000 in 1881 to 23.09 in 1888; and, were it not that there has been such a large immigration of less prudent Belgians, Italians, Spaniards, and Germans of late years into France, which resulted in there being 1,115,214 foreigners in that country in 1886, France would doubtless be nearly free from severe poverty, save among the most backward portion of its population, such as exists in Brittany and Savoy. As it is, many parts of the country districts of France are models of modest comfort and rural happiness; and should an early future bring England and France to federate, and thus put an end to the constant dread of war, which has so long served as an excuse for over population and so many other evils of civilisation, France would doubtless soon be imitated in her most praiseworthy parental forethought by all European nations deserving the appellation of civilised.

England and Germany, indeed, have within the last few years given manifest tokens that they will ere long adopt

the customs of their neighbor, for, in 1876, the birth-rate of England and Wales was 36.3 per 1000, and this fell to 30.6 in 1888; and, in Berlin, the birth-rate in 1880 was no less than 41.52 per 1000, a figure which fell to 34.60 per 1000 in 1888. As a consequence, too, of these downward rates in England and Berlin, the death-rate has fallen in England from 23.61 per 1000, its figure in the ten years between 1861-70, to 22.61 between 1871-80 and recently to about 20 per 1000 between 1881-90. In Berlin, the death-rate in 1879 was very high, 29.35 per 1000; but following the drop in the birth-rates the death-rates became in the succeeding years up to 1886; 31.29, 28.83, 27.42, 30.32, 27.75, 25.81, 26.93, 23.15 and 21.57. This shows how rapid the amelioration of the fate of the indigent classes is whenever the birth-rate begins to fall in over-peopled countries like those of Europe. I hardly like to calculate what numbers could subsist as comfortably as we should wish a human being to do in modern France, Germany, or the United Kingdom; but if emigration could relieve our shores suddenly of some millions, and do the same for France, and far more for Germany, I have not the least doubt that those who remained behind would have an immensely greater facility of obtaining the necessary supply of food and other requisites of life than they now have. At present, we, in European countries, live like trees in a thick forest. The stronger and more energetic of us intercept the air, food, and sunlight from the weaker; whereas, in a new country, like New Zealand, there is still room, food, and light enough for everyone to enable him to live his whole span of life. Here, we, with our numerous Colonies and glorious free-trade, which it was the grand triumph of economical science, as expounded by Adam Smith, to have secured to us, will for long be enabled to have safely a somewhat higher rate of increase than any other old country can; but our excess of births over deaths in 1886 (476,000) and ever since, was far too high, and has landed us in frantic efforts to increase wages, and in all sorts of revolutionary schemes; for necessity has no laws, and starving people will never be persuaded to succumb without a groan. Germany, too, which in 1885 had a population of 46,885,704, had, that year, an excess of births over deaths of no less than 530,000. No wonder that indigence is so prevalent in that great Empire. It is surely not requisite to fill a country to the fullest extent it is capable of getting a bare subsistence for. It is wiser for nations, as for individuals, to limit the size of their families so that all may be comfortable. Indeed, when a

nation has become populous enough to enable a good division of labor to be completely carried out, all accessions to the ranks of its laborers and brain workers are likely to result in a lower dividend for the nation.

It is lamentable to study the effects of indigence in our large cities, like London, Paris, or Berlin. Thus, while the death-rate in all Paris in 1887 was 23·37 per 1,000 inhabitants, it was actually 46·02 per 1,000 for the quarter Salpêtrière. In unfortunate Marseilles, where cholera and small-pox so often rage, in 1886 the general death-rate was as high as 34·98; but rose to the appalling figure of 56·04 in the poor quarters, near the Hotel de Ville, where hunger, filth and *insouciance*, generated by indigence, reign supreme. Our large cities are the graves of our country-bred folk. Paris, for instance, in 1886, was found to have 331 natives and 668 immigrants in 1,000 of its inhabitants, *i.e.*, twice as many strangers as natives. Manchester and our other manufacturing cities are as bad; and may be regarded as machines for killing off rapidly the children of the rapidly increasing part of our population. I have shown how much longer the life of the well-to-do in London is at present, when compared with the rapidly increasing classes in the poor neighborhoods; and in Paris, where the general mortality was 23·37 in 1,000 in 1888, it was only 9·08 per 1,000 in the Champs Elysées, where families are not more than two in number. The fall in the excess of births over deaths in France of late years has been quite remarkable, for in 1881 it was 108,000, and in 1888 only 44,772, or less than the excess in Scotland in the same year. Between 1881 and 1886, France was found to have a yearly addition to her population from excess of births over deaths and from immigration, of 2·22 per 1,000 inhabitants, or about 122,000 per annum. Italy, on the other hand, has an annual increase of 6·7; Austro-Hungary, 7·5; Belgium, 8·1; Denmark, 10·1; Holland, 10·2; and Russia, 12·9. Prussia, in 1878, had 10 per 1,000 of increase, so that at present that state, even with its large emigration, adds annually nearly half a million to its numbers; and the United Kingdom has recently added about 400,000 to its population annually.

I think I have now given enough facts and figures to make anyone who has followed me perceive that whatever other cause of poverty there may be, this tendency to over-populate our homes is the "original sin" of the human race, and such a gigantic cause of poverty that all others, in comparison with it, may be looked on as *quantités négligéables*.

I am as sensible as anyone can be to the extreme dangers to health and virtue caused by the use of alcohol, and, indeed, have always given my humble aid to those who would persuade their neighbors to live without that dangerous luxury. But, although the use of alcohol is fraught with mischief to many poor men and women, and to their luckless offspring, still the drunkenness of a particular workman does not, as large families do, tend to lower the wages of his class. It merely lessens his chance of securing his place in the terrible struggle for life, and in no way touches the real difficulty. This is well seen in Mohammedan countries, where alcohol is not used, and where yet poverty is terribly prevalent. As to bad land laws or unfair distribution of the wealth of society, these causes, in a country like this, have almost nothing whatever to do with the existence of poverty. Had our population remained stationary in 1851 (18 millions for England and Wales), after the repeal of the Corn Laws, we could not have helped being in comfort in all classes long ere now, even if no changes in land laws or in other laws of private property had been made; because under that supposition, trade and food supplies would have increased enormously, and the dividend of each person would have been far greater than it is at present.

What, then, are the consequences which follow from the frank admission of the population difficulty? What should be the conduct of the educated classes towards their less enlightened neighbors, as soon as the doctrine that large families are the cause of poverty shall be admitted by all reasonable and thoughtful persons? I have but little hesitation in replying to this query in the words of Mr. J. S. Mill, who says, in his *Principles of Political Economy* (Book II, Chap. xiii, § 2): "If the opinion were once generally established among the laboring class that their welfare required a due regulation of the numbers of families, the respectable and well-conducted of the body would conform to the prescription, and only those would exempt themselves from it who were in the habit of making light of social obligations generally; and there would then be an evident justification for converting the moral obligation against bringing children into the world who are a burden to the community, into a legal one; just as in many other cases of the progress of opinion, the law ends by enforcing against recalcitrant minorities obligations which, to be useful, must be general; and which, from a sense of their utility, a large majority have voluntarily consented to take upon themselves."

It would appear from this quotation that Mr. Mill contemplated the advent of the time when society shall look upon the producing of large families in long-peopled states like this almost as they do upon theft or other anti-social actions. Indeed he says explicitly (p. 226, Edition 1866) that: "Whilst a man who is intemperate in drink is discountenanced and despised by all who profess to be moral people, it is one of the chief grounds made use of in appeals to the benevolent, that the applicant has a large family, and is unable to maintain them. Little improvement (he adds) can be expected in morality until the producing large families is regarded with the same feelings as drunkenness, or any other physical excess. But while the aristocracy and clergy are foremost to set the example of this species of incontinence, what can be expected from the poor?"

This last sentence reminds me that a most able writer, "D." has advocated the establishing of what he styles a *Guild of Good Parents*, among whom a due regard for the size of the family should be considered as the bond of friendship or fraternity. Another writer has recommended that the state should discourage the production in countries like this of more than a maximum of four children to a family, which would result probably in an average of three to the family. Those who have more than this number, he maintains, should have some slight penalty to mark the disapprobation of the State, just as those are subjected to who omit to send their children to school.*

Mr. J. S. Mill believed that the admission of women to the franchise would tend to solve the population difficulty, because such a measure would give them for the first time in history the right to refuse to bring children into the world, who they know will be unwelcome, and who may cause their poor mothers much needless danger, without any advantage to any one. If this be true, we who believe in the great population difficulty will naturally vote for the enfranchisement of woman as speedily as possible.

Let me now allude to one or two *Objections*. Why, it will be asked, has the principle of population been so long of being recognised by our statesmen, and promulgated among the masses? Well, in the first place, it contradicts the *a priori* idea, which used to prevail, that, man being created, all things had been constructed to serve towards his welfare.

* A lady Malthusian contends that all women in European countries should be satisfied with two children until the grinding poverty, resulting from our chronic over-population, has disappeared. Of course, she adds, it is understood that *all* healthy women ought to have a right to their fair share of maternity.

Experience, alas ! has dispelled this optimistic idea ; and to reason and experience alone can we look in future for any alleviation of the evils of our existence. Among the poor we still hear occasionally the old biblical tradition urged as an excuse for a large family : " God never sends mouths but he sends meat " ; or, " Blessed is he that hath his quiver full." The rich, although in this country they now are beginning themselves to be very prudent in adding to their own families, as witness the birth rate of 19 per 1,000 in 1888 in Kensington, have certain weaknesses in favor of buying the services of their neighbors cheaply, and this is probably one reason why (unconsciously) they have so bitterly opposed the promulgation of the Neo-Malthusian literature of the day, and have prosecuted those who have attempted to enlighten their poorer neighbors, as Mr. Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Annie Besant did in 1877, and others have since done, *e.g.*, Mr. E. Truelove and Dr. H. A. Allbutt.

Next comes the very natural shrinking from taking any trouble in this matter, and we can well understand how much more agreeable it must be for a poor man to be told that his poverty is due entirely to other people's wrong doings, and that he need not take any trouble to correct any of his own bad or irrational habits. This fact is too well known to the rising popular statesmen of this and all times to need me to dilate on it. Lastly, it is said that the question is hopeless. The human race, it is urged, will never consent to allow reason to regulate its multiplication. The disease, it is said, is like cancer, yet beyond the reach of art. Better, it is said, to leave the question alone, and try to amuse the indigent classes as consumptive people are often buoyed up by palliatives and innocent delusions. This view I cannot at all concur in. The example of modern France and of our West end of London shows that the more thoughtful people of our race *can* control, with comparative facility, the size of their families, without any apparent evils following from their so doing, but, on the contrary, with a host of advantages to health, happiness, and civilisation. What these have done, all can do ; and I doubt not that, ere long, all civilised nations will, after a thorough and candid discussion of this fundamental question in man's destiny, arrive at a satisfactory solution, and remove the reproach of past social systems that over-population has always existed in their midst. " Poverty only exists because mankind follow their brute instincts without due consideration."

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